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THE MUSICAL TIMES, And Singing Class Circular.

JANUARY 1st, 1851.

TO OUR READERS.

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS" we wish you may have enjoyed, and we are still in time if our wishes can avail in wishing you "A HAPPY NEW YEAR!" In the midst of the festivities appropriate to the season, we are reminded that business must be attended to, for just as we are going to press, enter our book-keeper:—

Book-keeper. I wish to remind you, that at this time many of the subscribers should renew their subscription.

Editor. Well, you send a colored envelope, that surely is reminder enough.

Book-keeper. I fear not; and perhaps some don't know what it means; so I wish you could call attention to it.

Editor. I can't do better than repeat our conversation.

Book-keeper. I wish you would, and that you could impress on them that small as is the individual half-a-crown (the amount of each subscription), it makes a large sum when put together, and twelve-pence out of each has been spent in postage stamps.

Editor. As to the postage stamps, it may be very well to have the *Musical Times* sent by post for those who live in out-of-the-way places, but I always recommend my friends to order their numbers of the nearest bookseller or news-vendor; they then get it flat and unfolded, and for 1s. 6d. per annum instead of 2s. 6d.

Book-keeper. And it's much more convenient for us, especially with all these accounts due.

Editor. As for the accounts, I have merely to mention the matter, and my worthy readers will immediately—

Book-keeper. Hah! Hah! I wish it may be so.
[*Exit, laughing.*]

Now, his laughing implies a doubt, which we feel sure you will enable us to prove unfounded. Of the various Literary Institutions, Athenæums, and Mechanics' Institutions, to whom this work is regularly sent without charge, we would request to be informed from time to time if any alteration in their address be necessary; and, also, we shall be glad to have the name of any such institution in England which does not receive it, in order that they may be forthwith supplied. The present number will be sent free to a large number of musical professors and dealers in the United States;

and should they desire to have the future numbers, they can be supplied by the regular importers of English literature in all the large cities of the Union—or if they do not object to the postage charges, they can have the numbers direct through the post, by sending 3s. 6d. in a post-paid letter, addressed to our publisher.

CATHEDRAL MUSIC AND COMPOSERS, *to be continued in our next.*

OLD LONDON AND ITS MUSIC.

Contributed by E. HOLMES, Author of the "Life of Mozart."

CHRISTMAS is sacred to memory; but the most enthusiastic antiquary would scarcely choose a wintry day for lingering over the monumental effigies of the cathedral, and contemplating its stone figures

Imprisoned in black purgatorial rails,

unless he had prepared himself by some antidote to the "icy fang and season's difference," and had, like many a stage Hamlet—"that *within* which passeth show." The blazing fire and the bright green holly incline us to escape from the cold cloister, to muse upon the social life of our fraternity in bygone centuries. It is a change which we may make on the authority of the monkish proverb—"from the mass to the board;" or as we should now render it—"from the cathedral to dinner."

If our ancestors carried off the rewards of fame by their original conceptions of music, we have at least the solid satisfaction of more completely realizing them; together with such an improved condition of existence, that it enables most of us to compound for the empty pleasure which we might otherwise feel in the prospect of having our names sounded in the next century. Besides, time confounds and confuses identities. One Homer, a Grecian, lived a long time ago, and wrote poetry with success; another of more modern times has drawn beer, and been eminent as a licensed victualler. When great names are mentioned, we think of great works; and we more and more lose sight, in the long vista of time, of the individual who produced them. Even their features in portraits are not always to be trusted; and our notions of their personality are so imperfect, that very remote fame too often becomes of the texture and "airy fabric of a vision."

Still there is a very natural curiosity to get a peep into the domiciles and at the domestic economy of the distinguished men of past ages. Some of our old composers we still meet in splendid morning gowns and flowing hair, in the pictures of Kneller and Hogarth; but the wish to get more intimately into their society, and to learn how they carried on the war of life, is still power-